

# Facilities & Services Needs Assessment: Franklin Township



The old Big Run Primitive Baptist Church, built in 1871 of bricks made on-site, was a rural landmark for over a century. Now the home of the Franklin Township Historical Society, it is at the center of one the fastest growing areas of Marion County.

1999  
Department of Metropolitan Development  
Division of Planning

Facilities & Services Needs Assessment:  
Franklin Township  
1999

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## Facilities & Services Needs Assessment: Franklin Township

The Facilities and Services Needs Assessment is a master list of facilities and services with supporting maps and figures. This is not a plan that shows what facility or service should be located where. It is an assessment that looks at:

- current supply of the township's facilities and services,
- current demand for facilities and services,
- likely future levels of demand based on projected population, and
- a comparison of supply and demand to determine need.

The existing comprehensive land use plan for Franklin Township was adopted by the Metropolitan Development Commission (MDC) in 1991. This Assessment is not an update of the land use plan; it will not make land use recommendations for specific parcels of land. However, the information contained in this assessment will provide background information that will be critical to the next comprehensive land use plan update.

### Issues to be explored

*Population scenarios.* Many service providers allocate their services based on the number of persons to be served or upon some other demographic factor such as age or income. To be able to make the best allocations, good demographic projections are needed.

*Supply of facilities and services.* A simple formula for determining the need for additional facilities and service is the demand minus the supply equals the unmet need. The various service providers will have different ways of measuring the first part of the equation: supply. It may be by

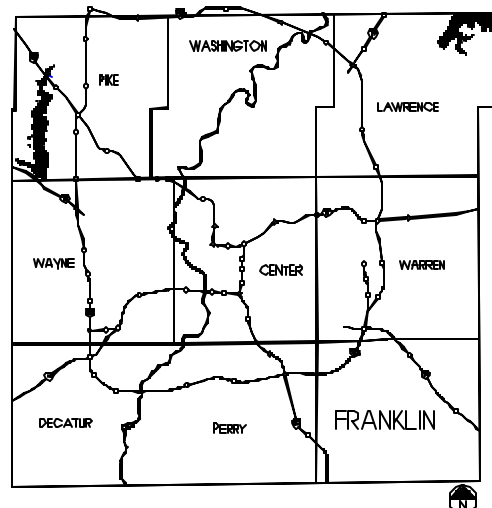
number of facilities, by acres, by number of staff persons or by some other method. Determination of current supply is one of the most important pieces of background information to be collected.

*Demand for facilities and services.* Demand is the second part of the above equation. Like facilities supply, demand can be measured in a variety of ways and is a vital part of the assessment. The assessment will determine and report on both the current demand and projected future demand.

### Franklin Township

Franklin Township has been a predominantly rural area on the fringe of a great city for many decades. It now finds itself becoming rapidly suburbanized. Many of the Township's services have had trouble keeping up with the rapid growth and the change from rural lifestyles to suburban ones. Much undeveloped farmland remains as do several small towns. Now is an appropriate time to take a clear look at the future of the township and make the best provisions for it.

MARION COUNTY TOWNSHIPS



## Background research

### Evaluation of existing plans.

Existing plans for Franklin Township have been evaluated to provide background information and serve as a jumping-off point for this Assessment. The Assessment does not supersede previous plans, but builds upon them. The plans evaluated are the Franklin Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan, the Indianapolis Thoroughfare Plan, the I-65/ County Line Road Strategic Plan, the Indianapolis Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan, and the Indianapolis Greenways Plan.

***Comprehensive Land Use Plan (1991).*** The Comprehensive Land Use Plan is a detailed plan that guides development for Franklin Township and outlines the necessary steps to action. It recommends land uses (residential, commercial, industrial, parks, or special uses), lists Thoroughfare Plan priority improvements for township roadways, and identifies critical areas in the township that need special consideration.

The township's planning and development goals are:

- Increase the rate and amount of commercial and industrial development relative to residential development,
- Regulate development in order to enable the transportation, sewer, and water service systems to meet future demands,
- Allow the park system to meet future recreation needs,
- Enable the school system to keep pace with the growing school-age population,
- Help police and fire services maintain acceptable public safety standards among a growing population, and
- Provide for an orderly transition from agricultural land uses to suburban land uses by recommending Very Low Density

Residential development in the more rural areas of the township.

The plan's policy recommendations include the stipulation that new developments should provide or make commitments for the provision of whatever infrastructure is needed to serve those developments.

The plan recommends policies that prevent fast-developing suburban areas from overburdening school, roadway, sewer, and water systems; and lower development cost in rural areas by encouraging them to develop after such systems are already in place.

The plan recommends uses for all township land, including areas that could remain rural throughout the next century. Much of the township is recommended for Very Low Density Residential development, which coincides with the township's rural character.

The plan also recommends establishing a linear park in the Buck Creek floodway. Further, the plan recommends other park uses, along with Low and Very Low Density Residential development, adjacent to the floodway. The plan strongly discourages development in wetland areas.

Commercial and industrial land uses are recommended near interstate interchanges and arterial roads.

***The Indianapolis Thoroughfare Plan (1996).*** The Thoroughfare Plan recommends the following priority improvements:

- Widening of South County Line Road from two lanes to four lanes between Emerson Avenue and Arlington Avenue.
- New Interstate interchange at I-65 and South County Line Road.

- Widening of Emerson Avenue from two lanes to four lanes from Thompson Road to Southport Road.
- Interstate interchange modification at I-74 and Post Road.

The first two priorities on this list have since been constructed.

***I-65/ County Line Road Strategic Plan***

***(December, 1997).*** The purpose of this Plan is to provide a more detailed, logical, and appropriate guide for future development of the area surrounding the intersection of I-65 and County Line Road, in Marion County. Two-thirds of this study area is located in Franklin Township.

This plan recommends light industrial use east of I-65 in the southwest corner of Franklin Township. The recommendation is consistent with the previous Plan for the area nearest to the interstate. However, approximately half of this previously vacant land is now developed residentially, significantly diminishing the area's previously planned industrial potential. Therefore, additional underdeveloped agricultural land nearby is now recommended for industrial uses. Logistically, light industrial land should have close and direct access to interstate transport. Sites newly recommended for light industrial land should have very convenient access via the new interchange.

Commercial development would primarily consist of highway serving commercial uses, while maintaining a larger, integral site for light industrial uses.

The remaining underdeveloped area is bounded by Stop 11 Road, Five Points Road, County Line Road, and Combs Road. It is recommended entirely for residential development, with a variety of development densities that decrease in an eastward direction.

Potential Park Sites (1992)

Location	Acres
7800 S. Arlington Ave.	100
10900 Southport Rd.	21
11200 E. Thompson Rd.	249
10500 E. Thompson Rd.	140
5400 S. Emerson Ave.	332
11300 Marlin Rd.	42
7800 Frye Rd.	78
9800 Maze Rd.	32
7800 E. Troy Ave.	12
6700 Churchman Ave.	26
6000 S. East County Line Rd.	46
7100 E. Thompson Rd.	10

***Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan, (1992).*** This plan provides guidance to decision makers in the form of basic information, goals and recommendations for the city's parks and recreation system.

The plan indicates that Franklin Township's portion of the county's park acreage is in just two parks. To further the goal of acquiring adequate park land for the population of Franklin Township, potential park sites have been identified. Twelve sites were identified with a total acreage of 1088. Some of the sites on this list have been developed for other uses and are no longer available. None of the sites have yet been acquired for park land.

***Indianapolis Greenways Plan (1994).*** The Indianapolis Greenways Plan describes the community's vision for an interconnected regional network of open space that supports and promotes recreation, fitness, and conservation.

In Franklin Township the Greenways Plan looked at the Buck Creek. The Buck Creek corridor is over 11.55 miles long and flows through both Warren and Franklin townships.

The public’s vision for this greenway corridor specified that the corridor be carefully developed with links to existing schools, parks and population centers and with significant areas designated for conservation.

The greenway should provide access to the creek for canoeing at Paul Ruster Park and the Brookville, Thompson and Marlin Road overpasses. A biking and hiking trail should connect Paul Ruster Park, Southeastway Park, and Franklin Township Community Park. Facilities at these parks should be improved by incorporating the Buck Creek trail with the trails within the parks. A horse trail should be established in Southeastway Park. A link from Southeastway to the proposed school at the intersection of Thompson and Senour Roads is highly recommended to facilitate a safe alternative path for use by students.

In this Assessment, population projections look at the year 2020 and at build-out population. Build-out population is the number of people living in Franklin Township in the year when every piece of property has been developed.

The projections are based on the premise that development will occur as shown in the 1992 Franklin Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan (with modifications for any recent developments that may have occurred differently than the plan recommended). Other assumptions used to develop the projections are that the average household size in Franklin Township will remain unchanged and that average building densities in each residential zoning category will remain unchanged.

Determining when full build-out might occur is difficult due to the number of variables. The economy, changing demographics, and provision of roads, sewers, water and other infrastructure all have a major impact on rate of development. Historic development rates can be projected out to determine build-out. However the development rate varies greatly depending on the historic period used, such as choosing the rate for the last ten, twenty or thirty years. Various historic development rates yield a range of possible build-out dates for Franklin Township from 2087 to 2241.

**Development of population scenarios.**

Population estimates

	% of Population	1997	2020	Build-out
Total Population	100.00	29,300	54,000	130,000
Under Age 5	8.04	2,356	4,342	10,452
Ages 5 - 19	33.53	9,824	18,106	43,589
Ages 20 -59	56.16	16,454	30,326	73,008
Ages 60 - 64	3.14	920	1,696	4,082
Age 65 and over	7.19	2,107	3,883	9,347

## **Exploration of standards for services and facilities.**

Local, state and national sources were researched to determine what standards currently exist for the provision of services and facilities. These standards were then applied to Franklin Township as shown in the charts on the following pages.

Planning standards should not be the only method used for devising the demand for services and facilities in a community. Each community has distinctive needs that should be kept in mind throughout the planning process. Standards do not account for the “diverse conditions, populations, and values of Urban America.” (*Recreation Planning and Design*) They can be useful guidelines to follow when developing future plans, but only when the inherent limitations of standards are understood.

The use of standards to determine need for services and facilities has limitations. One limitation is the age of the standard and data being used. Standards can become outdated because people’s preferences change over time.

Typically standards are not localized. Most standards are set at a national level and do not take into account factors that may affect the use of the standard at a local level.

The source of a standard can be a consideration. If a standard is issued from an organization that would benefit from the increased need of a service, the standard may be artificially high.

Some standards are not well defined. They can be construed to mean different things. For example, the standard for Emergency Medical Services requires a certain number of vehicles per 1,000 population. However the type of vehicles is not

defined. Whether the standard is for ambulances only, or a combination of ambulances, paramedic vehicles, and extraction vehicles, is not specified. This can cause a problem when defining what is really needed in an area.

Marion County’s townships are not walled-in communities that must provide all of their own services and facilities. Consumers of services and facilities are able to easily cross township boundaries to seek many of their needs. Also facilities located in Franklin Township frequently serve persons from outside the township. However, in Marion County the townships are readily known geographic units and provide a easy way to think about issues that may be variable across the county.



## Localization

Most of the above facility and service standards are nationally based. They should be considered guides. The uniqueness of every town, city and county, with their differing socioeconomic, climatic, geographic and cultural characteristics, makes it undesirable to apply all standards in the same manner in every community. In this assessment, localization of the standards was attempted through community surveys and public meetings.

A survey form was printed in the Franklin Township *Informer* and sent to every household in the township. Completed surveys were returned by 35 households (about one-third of a percent of the number of households in the township). The survey asked about the perceived adequacy of various local facilities and services. Results are shown in the table on page 13.

On October 27, 1998 a public meeting was held to discuss the Facilities and Services Needs Assessment. The meeting was sponsored by the Franklin Township Development and Assessment Committee and was conducted by an IUPUI-SPEA graduate planning class under contract to the DMD-Division of Planning. The meeting was announced in the Franklin Township *Informer*. Participants numbered 28 plus the six students, their professor and three City staff people.

Participants were asked to list the Township's strengths and weaknesses. They also discussed the opportunities to improve the township and the threats to the township's future quality of life. The participants brought up issues concerning local facilities, services and land use patterns.

Parks and recreation was the facility and service issue receiving the most attention. The issues of schools, open space and natural areas, and police protection were the next most important issues, each receiving about the same attention. This was followed by infrastructure, fire protection, community groups, senior citizen services, and public transportation. In the remaining set of issues were medical care, child care, cultural activities, and a youth center.

The most striking difference between the survey results and the meeting results involves the sufficiency of library service. In the survey 79% of the respondents said that the public library did not meet current needs. The library was not mentioned at the public meeting. This difference is probably explained by the fact that between the time of the survey and the time of the meeting, the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library announced that a new library branch would be constructed in Franklin Township.

The sufficiency of recreation facilities is clearly a major issue in Franklin Township. It was the most frequently mentioned issue at the public meeting and tops the survey as the community service that least meets the current need. However the standards indicate that the township is doing well in providing many recreation facilities such as tennis courts, football and soccer fields, and baseball and softball diamonds.

This apparent contradiction may be explained by the fact that many of these facilities are located on school properties where they may not be open to the public or where many members of the public do not feel welcome. Lack of access would lead to a perception of insufficiency.

EDUCATION							
	Standard	Current Township Need (based on standards)	Current Township Supply	+/-	Township Need in 2020	Township Need at Build-out	Source of Standard
K-5 classrooms	1/24 students	99	145	+46	289	698	A
Junior High classrooms	1/25	49	49	-	108	261	A
High School classrooms	1/26	59	93	+34	132	316	A
K-5 staff	1/22 students	108	129	+21	316	761	A
Junior High staff	1/20	61	67	+6	135	326	A
High School staff	1/19	81	83	+2	180	433	A
K-5 space	90 sq. ft./occupant	280,530	265,709	-14,821	647,010	1,263,211	A
Junior High space	120 sq. ft.	299,400	176,701	-122,699	335,640	616,259	A
Senior High space	150 sq. ft.	243,750	282,961	+39,211	527,250	966,389	A
Library book circulation	varies with population	278,350	173,948	-104,402	495,000	1,040,000	B
Source of Standard: A <i>Impact of Growth</i> by L.W. Canter et al      B <i>Practical Administration of Public Libraries</i> by J.L. Wheeler							

The above chart does not include data from the Beech Grove City School District nor from private schools, although some students living in Franklin Township do attend these schools. According to 1996-1997 figures from the Indiana Department of Education, 2% of Franklin Township students are in private schools and only 0.2% are home schooled.

The current trend in education planning is the use of performance standards as the primary service level measurement tool. The United States Department of Education emphasizes performance statistics to provide a picture of how well their education systems are doing. Examples of this type of measurement are student attendance, academic achievement and graduation rates. Although these are worthy tools, they do not measure resource requirements, which is what the above table attempts to do.

PARKS AND RECREATION							
	Standard	Current Township Need (based on standards)	Current Township Supply	+/-	Township Need in 2020	Township Need at Build-out	Source of Standard
Neighborhood Parks	1.25 acres /1000	36.5 acres	0	-36.5 acres	69 acres	162.5 acres	C
Community (Magnet) Parks	5 acres /1000	146.5 acres	96	-50.5 acres	275 acres	650 acres	C
Regional Parks	15 acres /1000	439.5 acres	188	-251.5 acres	825 acres	1950 acres	C
Playgrounds	1/2500 population	12	8	-4	22	52	C
Outdoor basketball courts	1/5000	6	4	-2	11	26	C
Tennis courts	1/2000	14.5	18	+3.5	27	65	C
Baseball diamonds	1/5000	6	10	+4	11	26	C
Football fields	1/20,000	1	5	+4	3	6	C
Soccer fields	1/10,000	3	8	+5	5	13	C
Softball diamonds	1/5000	6	12	+6	11	26	C
Golf course	9 holes/ 25,000	9 holes	9 holes	-	18 holes	45 holes	C
Outdoor swimming pools	1/20,000	1	0	-1	3	6	C
Picnic shelters	1/5000	6	5	-1	11	26	C
Trails	1 mile/ 7500	4	5.9	+1.9	7	17	C
Recreation centers	1/50,000	0.5	1	+0.5	1	3	C
Source of Standard: C Indianapolis Parks and Recreation							

The standards for park acreage are a goal of Indianapolis Parks and Recreation. If this goal were met, the amount of park acreage in Marion County would nearly double. Regional parks serve an area larger than a township. The acreage reported above is for Southeastway Park. Franklin Township residents would be expected to also use the county's other regional parks such as 4574-acre Eagle Creek Park.

The number of recreation facilities reported in the above chart is a combination of facilities provided at city parks and public schools in the township. Not all facilities on public school property may be available to the general public. Facilities on private property such as churches and private schools that may be open to the public are not reported in the above table.

Youth athletic leagues will frequently have needs in excess of the standards shown above.

One golf course operates in Franklin Township: Dakota Landing. Although it is privately owned, it is open to the public.

MEDICAL & SAFETY							
	Standard	Current Township Need	Current Township Supply	+/-	Township Need in 2020	Township Need at Build-out	Source of Standard
Physicians	1/3500	8.5	510	+501.5	15.5	37	D
Dentists	1/5000	6	8	+2	11	26	D
Nurses	1/222	132	220	+88	243	585.5	A
Mental Health Personnel	1/2000	14.5	5	-9.5	27	65	A
Medical Support Personnel	1/4000	73	230	+157	135	325	A
Hospital Beds	1/250	117	78	-39	216	520	A
EMS Full-time Personnel	1/245	119.5	18 + 12 to be hired soon, are also fire personnel	-89.5	220.5	530.5	E
EMS Vehicles	1/1000	29.5	3 + 8 fire vehicles	-18.5	54	130	E
Police Personnel	1/500	58.5	56	-2.5	108	260	A
Police Vehicles	1/1667	17.5	36	+12.5	32.5	78	A
Police Facilities	1 sq. ft./5	5,860 sq. ft.	Roll call site within Fire Station #3	-	10,800 sq. ft.	26,000 sq. ft.	A
Fire Personnel	1/605	48.5	18 + 12 to be hired soon, are also EMS personnel	-18.5	90	215	A
Fire Vehicles	1/5000	6	8+3 EMS vehicles	+5	11	26	A
Fire Facilities	1 sq. ft./4	7325 sq. ft.	23,300 sq. ft.	+15,975 sq. ft.	13,500 sq. ft.	32,500 sq. ft.	A
Source of Standard:							
A <i>Impact of Growth</i> by L.W. Canter et al				D Indiana Department of Health			

E International Association of Fire Chiefs
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The apparent oversupply of medical persons is due to the presence of the Saint Francis Hospital, South Campus in Franklin Township. Located on the Franklin Township side of the Franklin Township /Perry Township border, the hospital serves both townships as well as a wider area. Medical resources not connected to Saint Francis Hospital are rare in Franklin Township.

EMS and fire services are both operated by the Franklin Township Fire Department with overlapping personnel, vehicles, and facilities. Fire Station #3 also provides space for a Sheriff's Department roll call site. It would appear on the chart that the Fire Department has an excess of space. This is probably due to the standard assuming a concentrated population, rather than a scattered one such as Franklin Township's.

Police protection in most of Franklin Township is provided by the Marion County Sheriff's Department which employs approximately 1100 officers and other personnel. Franklin Township represents about 5.1% of the population of the Sheriff's Department's jurisdiction. The number of police personnel show above is 5.1% of the Sheriff's Department's total personnel. Number of vehicles was calculated in a similar manner.

For the eight categories of major crimes, Franklin Township reported less than 5.1% of the incidences. The township had a quarter of the number of robberies that would be expected for its population size; one-third of the burglaries, one-third of the larcenies, half of the vehicle thefts, and one-twelfth of the aggravated assaults. The number of murders, rapes and arsons are too small to make a statistically justified comparison.

RETAIL							
	Standard	Current Township Need	Current Township Supply	+/-	Township Need in 2020	Township Need at Build-out	Source of Standard
Bookstores	1/11,500	2.5	0	-2.5	4.5	11.5	F
Grocery Stores	1/2963.5	10	9	-1	18	43	G
Live Theaters	1/53,143	0.5	1	+0.5	1	2.5	G
Movie Theaters	1/6,481	4.5	0	-4.5	8	20	G
Pharmacies	1/5279	5.5	7	+1.5	10	24.5	G
Restaurants	1/1413	21	21	-	38	92	G
Cemetery acreage	1/526	55.5	39	-16.6	102.5	247	G
Source of Standard:							
F American Booksellers Association				G Current county level of service			

The standard shown for grocery stores, live theaters, movie theaters, pharmacies and restaurants are based on the number of each of these facilities in the county divided by the county population. The figure for grocery stores includes mini-marts. Cemetery acreage is based on SU-10 zoning, the Marion County zoning for cemeteries. Not every cemetery may be zoned SU-10.

Although Franklin Township has its share of the county's restaurants, with only a few exceptions, they are all located within a couple blocks of Emerson Avenue, the township's western edge. Thus the general population of Franklin Township may not be adequately served.

Franklin Township Development and Assessment Committee Survey Results			
Using the following system, please indicate your impressions of the availability of the following community services to current Franklin Township residents: 1-exceeds current need, 2 - meets current need, 3 - does not meet current need.			
	1 - exceeds current need	2 - meets current need	3- does not meet current need
Recreation facilities	3.6 %	3.6%	92.8%
Public library	3.5	17	79.3
Senior citizen services	4.8	24	71.4
Physical & mental health sources	10	25	65
Parks and environmental resources	7.4	30	63
Neighborhood based organizations	14	37	50
Law enforcement resources	7.6	46	46.2
Schools	3.6	57	39.3
Adult service organizations	11	50	39
Youth service organizations	9.5	57	33.4
Fire & emergency services	7.7	65	27
Churches	23	65	11.7
Youth athletic organizations	21	69	10.2

(continued from page 6)

Another explanation may be that Franklin Township is an exceptionally sports-minded area. Certainly the high percentage of young people would suggest that this is so. Franklin Township also has a tradition of providing many youth athletic opportunities. Because of this, the number of sports facilities suggested by

the standards may not be sufficient for Franklin Township.

Franklin Township has only two parks (with one on the way) and these parks are not highly developed. This also leads to the perception that Franklin Township is underserved with recreation facilities.



Physical and mental health sources ranked high on the survey as not meeting the current need although the standards show a surplus of medical personnel. Since almost all of the medical personnel is associated with a single hospital, persons seeking non-hospital based medical care have few options. So despite a seemingly huge oversupply of medical care, the reality may be that the day-to-day medical demand of the township's citizens is underserved.

Law enforcement/police protection were major issues at both the public meeting and in the survey. However the standards would indicate that the number of law enforcement personnel and vehicles are appropriate for the township's population. Statistics show Franklin Township to be a relatively low-crime area. This apparent contradiction might be explained by a heightened perception of threat being experienced nation-wide. It may also be explained by Sheriff's Department policy of not utilizing a number of scattered station houses and

roll call sites. The lack of physical structures may cause the perception that there is a lack protection.

Senior citizen services ranked near the top in the survey as not meeting current need. Standards for senior citizen services were not found in the literature review done for this assessment. This may be because senior services are so multi-faceted. Services include at-home care, assisted care, long-term care, transportation, nutrition, meal delivery, adult day care, community centers and recreation.

Until recently housing that is operated specifically for the elderly has been scarce in Franklin Township. However, several elderly housing developments have recently been approved for Franklin Township. With the construction of these developments, the perception of need for elderly services may soon be moderated.